

# Health Promotion Resource Guide



## Weight Management Program Implementation

### Lesson 1:

**Gather historical information about weight management programs offered at your installation.**  
Historical information can help avoid past mistakes.

- **What** programs were tried before? Which ones worked? Which ones didn't?
- What made a program **successful** – or **not**?
- **Where** were past programs implemented? Who **participated**? Who **ran** the programs?

### Lesson 2: Find out what the experts say. Use that evidence to design your program.

A US Preventive Services Task Force review of weight management programs found:

- **Combined diet and physical activity counseling** produced greater reduction of weight and abdominal fat than either approach alone.
- Successful interventions typically include **two to three components** (such as diet, exercise, behavioral therapy).
- Multi-component, intensive interventions including **behavioral therapy** most often lead to weight loss.
- Longer-term weight management efficacy depends on **continued intervention**.
- Maintenance strategies help **sustain** weight loss.

Read the full US Preventive Services systematic review:

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/3rduspstf/obesity/obessum.htm>

### Lesson 3: Relate weight management to readiness

- Current missions often require Soldiers to carry at least 50 extra pounds of equipment. Extra body fat makes that mission more difficult and puts Soldiers **at risk** for injury and at **increased risk** for developing preventable chronic disease.
- Research has linked increased BMI to **injury rates** in initial entry training.\*
- In addition, increased BMI has been associated with **reduced performance** by men in 1- and 2-mile runs, sit-ups, and push-ups.\*

\*Source: Jones BH, Bovee MW, Knapik JJ 1992.

Associations among body composition, physical fitness and injury in men and women Army trainees;  
*Body Composition and Physical Performance*. National Academy Press, pp 141-173.

### Lesson 4: Continuously improve the program.

Review materials frequently to keep the program from getting stale.

- Is the material up-to-date? Does the program address the questions that are being asked most frequently? If you do not usually teach a certain class, sit in on or teach the class occasionally.
- Has new research shown the need to update the program?
- Get feedback from program participants. Be willing to implement changes based on that feedback.

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### Bottom line

Use lessons learned from both successful *and* not-so-successful weight management programs to increase program impact and to use resources more efficiently. Do not be afraid to make changes if some part of the program is not working well.